

Chas. Froude

A

DISCOURSE

Shewing, that

The Yoke of Jesus Christ

Is easier than

The Y O K E of Sin ;

A N D

That consequently Wicked Men
meet with more Trouble and greater
Hardships in going into Hell, than
those which good People find in the
Way that leadeth into Heaven.

By B. R E G I S, B. D.

Rector of *Adisham* in *Kent*, and Chaplain
to the Right Honourable the Earl of
Galway, one of His Majesty's most
Honourable Privy-Council.

Δυσκολώτερον ἢ κακία τῆς ἀρετῆς. Chrys.

*Asperam & insuavem virtutum viam vitiorum
consuetudo facit, quæ si in alteram partem trans-
feratur, invenietur levis justitiæ semita. Hier.*

L O N D O N :

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A

DISCOURSE

Delivered at

the Chapel of St. John the Baptist

on

the Y O K E of St. John

AND

the complete Victory of Man

and the complete Victory of God

in the



by

the Right Honourable the Earl of

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A D I S.

A DISCOURSE,

Shewing that,

The Yoke of Jesus Christ

Is easier than

The Yoke of SIN, &c.

CHAP. I.

That a Medium must be kept, betwixt the two Extreame, Men run upon, as to the Christian Religion.

MOST Men run upon two Extreame as to the Christian Religion. There are many that fancy, it requires only the Performance of few Duties, and of some outward Acts of Piety. They persuade themselves, that Jesus Christ has done all that was necessary for their Salvation; that he has atoned for our Sins, pull'd out the Sting of Death, gotten the Promises of our Resurrection in Glory, and purchased unto us the Kingdom of Heaven, with its Supreme Good:

B

And

And so they flatter themselves, that if they do but go now and then to Church, and wish, tho' faintly, for Heaven, and give some Alms to the Poor, and keep themselves from committing enormous Crimes, they certainly will be saved, and enjoy after Death, a Supreme Felicity.

Abundance of others imagine, that the Christian Religion is extreamly strict, severe, and rigorous; full of Difficulties, abounding with Crosses, attended with Sadness, inconsistent with the Happiness of this Life, opposite to all manner of Pleasures, and contrary to the Inclinations of our Nature. Its Precepts to renounce the World, to deny one's self, to forsake Father, Mother, Wife, Children, and to part with all the Sweetness of this Life, for the Glory of God; to take up the Cross, to mortify the Flesh, to undergo many Afflictions, and even to die for the Service of Jesus Christ; these Precepts startle their Self-Love, which represents them impracticable: Wherefore they conclude, that it is in vain for them to pretend to perform what they require of us: And that Conclusion disposes them to give ear to any Objection, that may be disadvantageous to Religion, as well as to cherish all the Prejudices possible against, and to entertain all the ill Thoughts they can of, it. Afterward they are easily perswaded, by their corrupted Heart, to look upon it, as a Priest-Craft, a Cheat.

Thus do these two sorts of People meet, tho' they take two different Courses; for they both neglect Religion, which is the only Means to be happy, both in this Life and in the

the next: Wherefore my Design is to do my best Endeavours, in order to convince them both, that those who keep a Medium betwixt the two Extrems mention'd, understand best the Nature of the Christian Religion, are the wisest, and make the most use of their Reason.

The Chief Preacher, the Author, the Foundation, the Source of our Holy Religion, I mean, Jesus Christ, the everlasting Truth, who from Heaven brought that Religion, and who perfectly understood its Nature, tells us, that *His Yoke is easy, and his Burden is light*. Now, that by these Figurative Expressions of Yoke and Burden, are meant the holy Gospel, the Doctrine, the Dominion, the Service, the Precepts of Jesus Christ, is, I think, beyond all Dispute: And it may be seen in 1 Pet. ii. 3. Rom. ii. 4. that the word of the Original rendred *Easy*, signifies also Gracious, Good, Benign. And so the Meaning of these words, *My Yoke is easy, and my Burden is light*, must be this: My Religion, my Empire, my Discipline, my Injunctions, are supportable, gentle, kind, profitable, very feasible, and bountiful. But after all, Religion is a Yoke and a Burden, which confutes the People, who wrongfully think, that it requires little or nothing; but it is not an intolerable Yoke, as that of the Law, nor a grievous Burden, as the Ceremonies of false Religions; on the contrary, it is an easy Yoke, and a light Burden, which shews the Error of those, who look upon it, as extremely rigid and severe.

Men must be under the Yoke and the Burden, either of Sin and Vice, or of Jesus

Κύριος
Χριστός.
The Lord
is Graci-
ous. Χρηστός
τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Christ and Virtue ; there is no avoiding it. Now we Christians have this unspeakable Advantage over the rest of Mankind, that it is in our Power to shake off the hurtful, gauling, disgraceful, and destructive Yoke and Burden of Sin and Vice ; and to bear the easy, useful, excellent and honourable Yoke and Burden of Jesus Christ and Virtue : Wherefore, if we can but be intirely satisfied, which is the most tolerable, the easiest, the most advantageous, and the pleasanest, our Self-Interest, and our Self-Love, will surely persuade and induce us, to submit to that Yoke, even to cherish it. Now, my Design is to convince you, (at least to endeavour it) that the Yoke and the Burden of Jesus Christ and Virtue, are incomparably more supportable, more gentle, more profitable, and more delightful, than the Yoke of Sin and Vice ; but before that, I must shew you the vast difference there is betwixt the Yoke of the Law, and the Yoke of the Gospel.

C H A P. II.

The Difference betwixt the Yoke of the Law, and the Yoke of the Gospel.

THE Mosaical Law was very pompous, extremely lofty, and most domineering. It set out all the Rights, God has over Men ; and exacted rigorously what was due to him. It was exceedingly strict and severe ;

severe ; for it oppressed them with abundance of Statutes about Feasts, Sabbaths, and Cleanings ; about Blood, and the Distinctions of Beasts ; about the entring into the Congregation, the First-born, the Tithes, the Firstlings, the Expiation of an uncertain Murder ; and about many other things : It compell'd them to make a vast quantity of Sacrifices of divers Kinds ; and it made them sink under the Burden of a prodigious Number of Rites and Ceremonies. In short, it was so full of Ordinances, that the performing of 'em was look'd upon by an Apostle, as a Yoke insupportable ; for, said St. Peter, in the first Council of the Christian Church, speaking of that Yoke, *Neither our Fathers, nor we, were able to bear it.* Acts 15. 10. I may add, that tho' the Law prescrib'd so many things, upon pain either of Death, or of Curse, or of some other great Punishments ; yet it did not afford the least Assistance towards the Performance of 'em. It was indeed full of Precepts, Statutes, and Ordinances, but no Help was to be expected from it ; and, which was very deplorable, it did not give the least hopes of Forgiveness, Gal. 3. 10. after the Commission of Sin : On the contrary, it cursed every one that did not continue in all things, that were written in it, to do them : And was that Law attended, with some degree of an inward Light, it only serv'd to shew them the Enormity of their Crimes, and their exceeding great Unhappiness, and to stir up in their Minds dreadful Perturbations, thus express'd by St. Paul, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this Death !* Rom. 7. 24.

But

But blessed be the Lord, it is quite otherwise with the Holy Gospel, rightly called Grace, in opposition to the Law ; for God has made himself manifest to us in that Gospel, not with a frightful Pomp, and a terrible Splendor, not with Thunders and Lightnings, with Smoke, Fire, and the quaking of a Mount : but in a gentle, mild, kind, familiar, and affable manner ; under the Veil of the Humanity of his beloved Son, by whose means he proposes a Reconciliation betwixt him and us ; he proffers the Forgiveness of our Sins, he tenders us his most precious Love, the Source of all Glory and Happiness ; he promises his most powerful Protection, and the Assistance of his Spirit against all our Enemies ; and he declares that he will grant us the glorious Title of his Children, and make us Heirs of the Eternal Kingdom of Heaven, if we do but repent of our Sins, and believe in Jesus Christ, who enlightens our Understandings, by his Sacred Word and Holy Spirit ; that we may clearly see, that the performing these two Conditions of the Gospel, is the true Means whereby we may obtain Eternal Salvation ; and who gives us all the Help, all the Succour, and all the Encouragement we can reasonably desire, that we may be able to accomplish 'em, and obey his Commandments ; which, far from being grievous, intolerable, and manifold, are very mild, gracious, and condescending ; most reasonable, advantageous, and contracted in *St. Matt.* within two or three Lines, namely, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind ;*
and

St. Matt.
 22.

and thy Neighbour as thy self: Even a word does contain 'em; for St. Paul tells us, That Love, or Charity, is the fulfilling of the Law. Rom. 13. 10.

C H A P. III.

That the Gospel is all over Charity.

AND indeed, the whole Gospel, whether consider'd in its Myſteries, or in its Doctrine, or in its Discipline, or in its Precepts, or in its Promiſes, or in its Threatnings, or in its Sacraments, is all over Charity. In the Myſtery of the Bleſſed Trinity, you ſee a moſt loving Father, a well-beloved Son, and a Spirit full of Charity. The Myſtery of the Incarnation is all Love. There you may ſee the wonderful, tranſcendent, and unſpeakable Love of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, towards Mankind: Of the Father, *Who ſo loved the World, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; of the Son, *Who was pleaſed to be made Fleſh, and to dwell among us*; Joh. 1. 14. *To be delivered for our Offences, and to die for our Sins*; Rom. 4. *To riſe again for our Juſtification, And to ſit at the Right Hand of God, in order to make Interceſſion for us*: 1 Cor. 5. 3. Heb. 7. 25. Of the Holy Ghoſt, *who conceived Jeſus Chriſt, that he might intirely free him from our natural Corruption, which had made him incapable to accompliſh our Salvation.* Matth. 1. 20.

The Doctrine of the Gospel teaches us,
 Matth. 16. 26. that *A Man profiteth nothing, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul : That*
 Rom. 8. 28. *all Things work together for Good to them that love God : That Godliness is profitable unto all*
 1 Tim. 4. 8. *things, having promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come : That if any*
 Rom. 8. 9. 11. *man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his ; but if the Spirit of him that rais'd up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that rais'd up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by the Spirit that dwelleth in us : That*
 ---18. *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory, which shall be re-*
 John 3. 5. *vealed in us : That Except a man be born of water, i. e. be baptized, and of the Spirit, i. e. do begin a new, pure, innocent, and spiritual*
 Acts 26. 18. *Life, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God : That we are sanctify'd, comforted, and justify'd by*
 Rom. 1. 12. 3. 28. *Faith, which without Works is dead : That the true Worshipers worship the Father in spirit and*
 Jam. 2. 26. *in truth. That excellent Doctrine gives us*
 Joh. 4. 23. *such a Knowledge of God, and of his Per-*
 Acts 17. 28. *fections, that it induces us most powerfully to love Him with all our Heart ; for it teaches us, that he is the Origine of all Good, the Source of a Supreme Happiness, the Fountain of an eternal Glory, and the Spring of an everlasting Life : That his Almighty Power has created, does preserve, and govern us ; For in him we live, and move, and have our being : That his Goodness provides for our Necessities ; that his Mercy forgives us our Sins, that his Charity calls us to Him, that we may be partakers of his Graces ; and that his transcendent Bountifulness will make us enjoy a*
 most

most glorious, and happy Immortality. An admirable, and a wonderful Love is plainly seen in all that Doctrine of the Gospel. Nothing can be more evident, than that its End is to engage us to work out our Salvation, and its Design to induce us to love God, with all our Heart, and its Aim to make us most happy for ever.

The Discipline of the Gospel intends either to save great Sinners, or to keep others from falling into Crimes, as you may clearly perceive in these following Passages. *If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother, but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee, as an heathen man and a Publican. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. If any man obey not our word by this Epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. And when Jesus had breathed on his Apostles, and given them his Holy Ghost, who is a Spirit of Meekness and Charity, he conferred upon them the Authority to exercise the Discipline of his Gospel, saying, Whosoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* There is a Fact related in 1 Cor. 5. which evidently shews, that the Discipline of the Gospel is very careful of Men's Souls. St. Paul hearing, that there was among them an Incestuous

Matt. 18.
15.
1 Tim. 5.
20.
2 Thess. 3.
14, 15.
John 20.
22, 23.

C

Man,

Man, Let them know, that as absent in Body, but present in Spirit, he had already judg'd concerning the Offender : Now the Sentence, which he passed on the guilty Person, was, *That they should in a publick assembly deliver him unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, in the name, and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ ; but why ? That the Spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

Observe well how mild and full of Charity that Discipline is, what tender regard it has for the Souls of great Sinners, and how admirable its Methods are, to make Men sensible of their Faults, and to reclaim them from their Vices. First, to save them the Shame and the Reproach, which they deserve, we must admonish them privately ; If that Method do not work on them, another Essay must be made, with two or three Men more ; but if they be still refractory, we must have our Recourse to the Church ; but if she can't reform them, we are only permitted to look on them as desperate Sinners.

Its Precepts are full of Love and Charity as you may observe in the following Passages.

Luke 17. *If thy brother trespass against thee rebuke him,*
3, 4. *and if he repent forgive him, and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent,*

Matt. 5. *thou shalt forgive him. Let your Light so shine*
16, 44, 45. *before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in Heaven. Love your Enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you. Why so ? That ye may be the children of your father which*

which is in heaven; for he makes his Sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust. Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. Lay not up for your selves treasures upon Earth, ^{Matt. 6. 19, 20.} where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do break through and steal; But lay up for your selves treasures in Heaven; where neither moth nor rust does corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal. Seek ye first the ^{---33.} kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all things, necessary for Life, shall be added unto you. Judge not that ye may not be judged. Ask, ^{vii. 1, 7,} and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. Enter in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad ^{---13, 14.} is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto Life; and few there be that find it. This is my ^{John 15.} Commandment, that ye love one another, as I ^{12.} have loved you. In all these Precepts an admirable Love is plainly seen.

Its Promises are full of Charity. Whatsoever ^{John 14.} ye shall ask in my name, said Jesus Christ, that ^{13.} I will do; that the father may be glorified in the Son. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are ^{Matth. 11.} heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Every ^{28.} one, that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or ^{xix. 29.} sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting Life. Who ^{x. 42.}soever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a Disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. We, according to the

- 2 Pet. 3. Promise of God, Look for new Heavens, and
 13. a new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, said
 2 Tim. 4. St. Peter. Henceforth there is laid up for those
 7, 8. that have fought the good fight, finished their
 course, and kept the faith, a crown of righteous-
 ness; which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall
 give unto them at his appearing. The faithful
 1 Pet. 5. 4. Servants of Christ shall receive a crown of glory
 which fadeth not away. Eye hath not seen, nor
 1 Cor. 2. ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of
 9. men, the things which God hath prepared for
 them that love him. You plainly see in all these
 Promises a wonderful love: There's a great
 Charity even in his Threatnings; for the end
 of 'em is to deter Men from Evil, and to
 bring them from the way of Hell, into the
 way of Heaven. It is impossible but that offen-
 Luk. 17. 1. ces will come, but woe unto him through whom
 they come. Every idle word that men shall speak
 Matt. 12. they shall give an account thereof in the day of
 36, 37. Judgment: For by thy words thou shalt be justi-
 fied, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.
 xiii. 41, The Son of Man shall send forth his Angels, and
 42. they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things
 which offend, and them which do iniquity, And
 shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall
 be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The Lord Jesus
 2 Thess. 1. shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty
 7, 8. Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them
 that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel
 of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished
 with everlasting destruction from the presence of
 the Lord, and from the glory of his power. God
 Rom. 2. 6, will render to every man according to his deeds:
 7, 8, 9. To them who by patient continuance in well-doing,
 seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal
 life:

life : But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness ; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil. The wages of Sin is Rom. vi. death. Now, the Aim of all those Threat-²³. nings is, as you may easily perceive, to reclaim us from our ill Courses, and to induce us to amend our lives. The Prophet Joel doth plainly intimate that such is the design of God's Threatnings, when he says, *The day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who* Joel 2 11, *can abide it? Therefore, says the Lord, Turn* 12, 13. *ye even unto me, with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning ; and rent your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God ; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.*

As to its Sacraments, if we consider the End for which they are instituted, we can't but acknowledge, that it is exceeding gracious and charitable; for Baptism has been ordained, that we may be purified and absolv'd from Sin, which caused a most deplorable Alienation betwixt God and us, that we may be received again into his most precious Favour, and obtain the Gift of God's Holy Spirit, whereby we are enabled to work out our Salvation; that we may be inserted into the Church, God's blessed Family, the Mystical Body of Christ ; get a Title unto a glorious Immortality, and have an assurance of being made partakers of an eternal Bliss. And the holy Eucharist has been appointed, that it may call our blessed Lord to our Minds; together with what he has done in order

order to purchase unto us the Kingdom of Heaven, that it may quicken our Love for, and raise in us pious Affections towards that good and gracious Redeemer; that we may feed our Souls with heavenly Manna, with the Bread of Life, and revive and cherish 'em with a most delicious Liquor; that our Faith may be confirm'd and strengthen'd, our Hope nourish'd, our Resolutions to walk in the way of Heaven encourag'd; our Hearts fill'd with comfort and gladness, and our Minds enlighten'd and sanctify'd: Finally, that we may draw nigh to God, the Fountain of all Bliss, unite our selves fastly to our blessed Lord, the Author of Eternal Salvation, and combine in Charity one towards another.

C H A P. IV.

The Nature of Sin.

NOW I must endeavour to convince you, that the Yoke and the Burden of Sin is incomparably more uneasy, more intolerable, and a great deal less advantageous, gentle, and pleasant, than the Yoke and the Burden of Jesus Christ and Virtue, and so persuade you to submit to the last, and to cherish it.

In order to it, I must tell you forthwith, that Satan, the great Enemy of our Happiness, who out of Envy and Malice, and by his Flatteries, Wiles, and Enticements, draws continually a prodigious number of Souls into his

his Kingdom full of Darknes, Horrors and Torments; has been the Instrument whereby Sin and Vice crept into Man's Heart: Then I must represent to you the Nature of that Sin, and of Vice, which is intirely opposite and repugnant to all Goodness and Piety, to Uprightness, Sincerity and Holiness; to Religion, Righteousness, and all Virtues; for it is edg'd with an inveterate Malice against the Soul; and with an everlasting Hatred against Godliness, full of Stratagems and Deceits to draw Men into Perdition, delighting in Uncleaness, thwarting all Religious Duties, and opposing all that's good, moderate, wise, and charitable. It is of a Nature so cleaving and adherent, that Ivy sticks not closer and faster to a Tree, or to a Wall, than Sin does to Men. When once it has taken Root in their Hearts, let them do all they can, let Repentance and Amendment tear it off, and pluck it up, there will yet be some Remains, till their *Earthly Houses be dissolv'd.*

2 Cor. 5.

Sin is a Spring out of which issue all manner of Wickedness and Impurity. *Adultery, Fornication, Uncleaness, Lasciviousness, Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Heresies, Envyings, Murders, Drunkenness, Revellings, and such like, flow from that impure Spring.*

Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

Sin at first is extreamly flattering, fawning and alluring; it seems to be very sweet, pleasant, delicious, and charming. It appears at first sight of a very easy, complaisant, gentle and obliging Nature; and it looks as if it were a peaceable, mild and officious Servant; but has it once drawn in our Affections,

Rom. 7.
27.

Affections, crept into our Hearts, screw'd it self into our Minds, and taken possession of our Souls: Then we find to our Sorrow and Confusion, that it is exceedingly dangerous, fierce and dismal; full of Treachery, Falshood and Perfidiousness, and abounding with Grievs, Vexations and Torments: We find that it is of a most unquiet and turbulent Nature; that it never ceases to tempt, to corrupt, and to harden our Hearts, and that it will reign over us, with all the Imperiousness, and all the Tyranny imaginable; bring us into Captivity to its Law, and make us rebel against our Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and our Supreme Judge. We find that it deals with us as *Jaël* dealt with *Sisera*; she call'd him in, into her Tent, gave him Milk, cover'd him with a Mantle; and seem'd to be concern'd for his Safety, and to favour his Rest; but as soon as he was fast asleep, out come the Instruments of Death, a Nail and a Hammer; *She smote*, says the Scripture, *the Nail into his Temple, and fastened it into the Ground, so he died*: Thus does Sin use Men; it intices and allures their Hearts, by shewing for them a seeming great Tenderness, by assuring them of an intire Security, and by promising, that they shall have all manner of Diversions, enjoy abundance of Pleasures, possess vast Riches, and that they shall be rais'd to great Honours; but has it once lull'd Men asleep in its Impurity; alas! it sets its Cruelty at work, far from keeping them safe, it hurries them into the most imminent Dangers, and instead of Diversions, it brings Distress and Anguish upon them: instead of

Pleasures,

Pleasures; it fills their Soul with Griels and Afflictions; instead of Riches, it plunges them into an unexpressible Misery, and instead of Honours, it covers us with Shame, Infamy, and Confusion.

C H A P. V.

Its dismal Effects and direful Mischiefs:

BUT let the dismal Effects of Sin, its direful Mischiefs, and its horrible Attendance utterly convince us of its exceeding great Tyranny, Treacherousness and Barbarity. What dreadful Mischiefs, what lamentable Disasters, what dismal Confusions has it not caus'd in Heaven; where God does manifest his Glory, his Power, his Wisdom, his Holiness, in a special and extraordinary manner. It has corrupted a vast number of pure and glorious Spirits, induced them to conspire, and incited them to rebel against their Creator, their Preserver, their Supreme Lord, against Almighty God, who was the Origine of all their Perfections, and the Fountain of their unspeakable Happiness: And so render'd these most illustrious Creatures the eternal Objects of his Wrath, Indignation, and Vengeance. Man was no sooner made, but that restless and implacable Sin egg'd them on to make use of all their Guile and Craftiness, in order to deprave him, that he might be Partaker, with his Posterity, of their everlasting Misery. The thing was undertaken, put in
D execution,

execution, and brought to pass. Man was drawn away from God and his Law, alienated and estrang'd from his great Benefactor. Then Sin slipt into his Heart, and from thence spread all over, got through all the Faculties of his Soul, and run into all the Members of his Body ; in short, it corrupted the whole Man: And so his Mind that was before pure, holy, clear, and serene, adorn'd with excellent Virtues, and a wonderful Knowledge, attended with innocent, pious, and good Thoughts, is now viciated. Sin has fill'd it with all manner of Impurity, with Profanation, Ungodliness, Vanity, Ignorance and Darkness ; with unprofitable Notions, with perverse Disputes, rash and pernicious Controversies, silly and impertinent Inquiries, that only serve to hide the Truth ; with wretched Contrivances, with ~~sickness~~, and with Swarms of roving, empty and foolish Thoughts.

As to his Conscience, which ought to induce him to perform carefully his Duties, Sin has likewise corrupted it : For it has render'd
 Eph. 4. 19. it hard, past feeling, insensible ; seared it
 1 Tim. 4. with a hot Iron ; filled it with abundance of
 2. dead Works ; and furnished it with false and
 Heb 9. 14. absurd Excuses.

His Heart which ought to be an unspotted, a clean, a holy, and a sacred Temple, for the Glory and the Service of our Supreme Lord, has been also extreamly defiled by that abominable Sin ; for it has made it a Hell of Wickedness and Impiety, of Pollution and Filthiness, of a deep and unsearchable Deceit and Hypocrisy. It has made it capable of entertaining

tertaining any Vice, any Crime, and copious in vain, foul, and wicked Desires; it has stored it with Impenitency, Unbelief, Treachery, and Infidelity; and supplied it with Contempt for Religion, with Disdain for the most precious Promises of the Gospel, and with Scorn for God's dreadful Threatnings.

As to his Will, which ought to be very dutiful and most submissive to the good pleasure of God's Will, ready and inclin'd to perform his Commandments; busie and delighting in doing Good; Sin has made it very disobedient to, and most rebellious against God Almighty, extreamly averse to his Laws, incapable of its self to do any Good, and very apt to be obstinate. The Memory which should be a Repository of good, pious, and charitable Thoughts; of holy, pure, and heavenly Notions; of the Sacred Word of God, of the true Knowledge of our Salvation, and of an useful Learning: Sin made it ~~an~~ a Sink of evil, prophane, and uncharitable Thoughts; a Receptacle of irreligious, filthy, and hellish Notions; a Magazine of Oaths, Curses, Imprecations, and Blasphemies; a Common Sewer of Heresies, Superstitions, and Idolatry, and a Receiver of wicked Custom, ill Habits, and pernicious Principles.

Besides, it has corrupted all our Passions. I need but mention that, which is the Spring of all the others, *i. e.* Love, the first, the Mother, the chief, the most powerful, the reigning Passion, from and to which all the rest are derived and reduced; for if that Source be corrupted, all the Streams that flow

from it must be so likewise. Now Sin has made our Love exceedingly vicious, by applying it to, and wrapping it up in unworthy, despicable, and dangerous Objects, such as are the Corruptions, the Pride and the Lust of the Flesh; the vain Honours, and the false Greatness of this World; its seeming Goods, and deceitful Riches, its criminal Diversions, and wicked Pleasures; which Pleasures spurring Men on to all manner of Villanies, are the Plagues of Mankind, and the Gulphs that drown most part of them in Perdition; and the Magazines from whence the mortal Enemies of our Salvation furnish themselves with Arms to destroy us.

Rom. 7. 23. Moreover Sin having taken Possession of the whole Man, does not only war against his Mind, but it likewise viciates his Members, and *brings him into Captivity to its Law*, as St. Paul says.

1st. It depraves the Eyes by sowing in them the Seeds of Fraud, and of Treachery; of an abominable Lust, and of an odious Pride; of a gnawing Envy, of a pitiful Covetousness, of a raging Wrath, and of a prodigious Number of insatiable Desires. Now the Eyes communicating these cursed Seeds to the whole Man, he brings forth a world of Mischiefs.

2^{dly}. Sin fills the Ear with fulsome and perfidious Flatteries, with detestable and destructive Calumnies, with malicious Slanders, with hateful Lies, and with obscene Stories.

3^{dly}. What horrible Mischiefs, what sad Confusion does it not cause by the means of the Tongue, tho' one of the smallest parts of

of a Man's Body? It makes that little Member the Instrument of all manner of Wickedness and Desolation. Good God! what a prodigious Noise does it not make? What a deal of Hurt does it not do? How many Heresies and Errors does it not propagate? How many Contentions, how many Disputes and Factions does it not stir up in the Church? Alas! it sets whole Families, whole Kingdoms, and the whole World on Fire, with Variance, and Strife, and Jars and Divisions. It depraves, it infects, it poisons the whole Society of Men. Be pleased to hear what St. James says of that little, but exceedingly mischievous thing, and you'll find that what I have asserted of it is confirm'd by that Apostle. *The Tongue, says he, is a Fire, a world of Iniquity; it defileth the whole Body, and setteth on Fire the course of Nature, and it is set on Fire of Hell, i. e. Kindled by the Devil with a Fire that comes from the Bottomless Pit. He goes on, Every Kind of Beasts, and of Birds, and of Serpents, and things in the Sea is tamed, and has been tamed of Mankind; but the Tongue can no Man tame, it is an unruly Evil, full of deadly Poison.*

4thly. Sin has made the Hands and the Feet Instruments of Violence and Mischief, making use of the dexterity of the one, to steal, to hurt, to murder, and of the swiftness of the other, to run in order to indulge wicked Desires, either in taking Revenge, or in satisfying vain Curiosities, or in gratifying Concupiscence. Thus you see what a Monster of Wickedness Sin has made Man. But let us consider further, its direful Attendance, I mean

mean the horrible Judgments that follow after it, even in this Life.

C H A P. VI.

The dreadful Judgments it brings upon Men during this Life.

IT is Sin which has enrag'd Man against Man, and Nations against Nations; which arms them, that they may destroy one another. How many Murders, how many Slaughters, how many Massacres has it not caus'd? How many Wars has it not kindled? What Devastations has it not made? It is Sin that brought the Deluge in *Noah's* time, that drown'd *Pharaoh* and his Army in the *Red-Sea*; that so often drew dreadful Punishments upon the *Israelites*; that turned *Sodom* and *Gomorrak* into a stinking Lake, and brought upon *Jerusalem*, the Glory of the Earth, an intire Desolation and an utter Destruction; that has ruin'd so many Empires, and laid waste so many Countries, and obscur'd the Christian World with a prodigious Darkness; from whence issued an extream Ignorance, a gross Superstition, and an horrible Idolatry. It is Sin that does its utmost Endeavours to drive away and to banish Charity (which is to Religion what our Soul is to our Body) from among Men by sharpening so much Tongue against Tongue, by setting to Paper Pens flowing with Gall and Poison; filling so many Pamphlets with Bitterness, and with
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more Revilings, abusive Language, and biting Jest, to provoke, than with strong Arguments, good Sense, and evident Reasons to convince, and that spurs Men on to follow their Adversaries with more Clamour; Bawling, Reproach and Barking, than with Skill, Art and Ingenuity. It is Sin that has pour'd out upon Mankind a World of Grievs, Troubles, Disgraces, and Afflictions; that fills them with Defects, Imperfections, and Prejudices; that torments them with a multitude of Infirmities, Diseases, Sickneses, and grievous Sufferings; that plagues them with hideous Havocks, with terrible Confusions, and direful Ranfackings; that loads them with Shame, Reproach, and Infamy; that causes destructive Famines, and fatal Plagues, dreadful Tempests, Storms, and Inundations; terrible Earthquakes, Thunders and Lightnings; that has brought Death with a direful Sting upon them, and laid the very Prince of Life dead in a Sepulchre. It is Sin that has poison'd the Pleasures, the Diversions, the Comforts, the Goods and the Riches of this World; that has render'd its Dignities, Honours, Preferments and Reputation dangerous, as well as Peace, Quietness and Plenty, Health, Strength and Courage; that has made Eating, Drinking and Sleeping full of Inconveniences: In short, it is Sin that has turn'd the Blessings of this World into Curses.

It is Sin that has made Men obnoxious to all the Temptations of the Devil, to all his Suggestions, Deceits and Sollicitations, and that has expos'd them to all his Snares, Devices and crafty Wiles; for were it not for Sin,

Sin, all his Engines, all his Cunning, all his Efforts, could by no means prevail with their Souls, nor have any advantage over them. It would not at all be in his Power to deprave their Nature, to hurt 'em and to hurry them along to destruction. Satan knowing, that his utmost Endeavours can't corrupt us without entertaining and cherishing his Temptations, neglects nothing to hold Correspondence with our Passions, and to practise upon our Affections, which he allures with all the *Subtilty* imaginable. Having attracted and brib'd them, he conveys slyly by their means the Seeds of all manner of Wickedness into our Souls, which afterward conceive and bring forth a World of ill Thoughts, of mischievous Words, and bad Deeds. That deceitful and treacherous Spirit, who delights in doing Evil, searches out our Dispositions and Inclinations; to them he sorteth his Temptations, and from them he takes Ingredients which he tempers with the Instigations he makes use of, in inducing them to do Evil; as for Example. Has a Man a great deal of Wit and Pride? He'll be sure to prompt him to disbelieve the Sublime Truths of the Gospel, that are above his Understanding, and to despise its Ingenuity and Plainness. Is another inclin'd to Lust and Drinking? He won't fail to persuade him to scorn all its Rules about Contenance and Sobriety. Has a third great Riches? He'll tempt him to be Self-conceited, to slight his Neighbours, and to give himself over to his Pleasures. Is a fourth poor? He'll induce him to find fault with the Distributions of Providence, to be discontent, and to

murmur against God. Has a fifth a great deal of Learning? He won't miss to put into his Head a vain Glory. Is a sixth of a strong Constitution, and full of Youth? He will incite him to take all manner of sinful Pleasures. Is a seventh infirm and sickly? He will make him peevish, fretful, capricious, impatient and whimpering. Hath an eighth a great Authority? Satan will incite him to wrong, and to scorn, and to abuse, and to oppress his Neighbours.

It is Sin that cools Men's Devotions, extinguishes their Zeal, quenches their Fervency, and deadens their Faith, that casteth into their Minds impertinent Thoughts, to hinder their Attention, either in their Prayers, or at the hearing, or at the reading God's Word; and that makes them misapply, misconstrue, and wrest to their Perdition the Holy Scripture. It is Sin that has made the Law of Life and Liberty, a Law of Bondage, of Curse, and Death; turned the very Preaching of the Gospel, a Saviour of Death unto Death, and provok'd the best of Beings, the most gracious God, the everlasting Father, whose Compassion is unspeakable, and the infinitely bountiful Creator, to pursue the Workmanship of his Almighty Power, with Wrath and Indignation, even with Hatred and Perdition, *To repent of, and to grieve at his* Gen. 6. 6. *having made Men.* Alas! it is Sin that has drawn, and that keeps them afar off, from their Supreme Good; that has been the Cause of their having no Hope, and of their being *without God in the World*; and that has made 'em Aliens, Foreigners, and Strangers from

Eph. 2. 12,
17, 19.

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from that Fountain of Glory. It is Sin which has so incensed the Almighty against wretched Men, that by a just Judgment, he has struck their Souls with Blindness and Obstinacy, and brought 'em under Subjection to the Concupiscence of their Flesh, to *Unclean-
ness, and to vile Affections*, even to the Fury, Malice, and Revenge of Satan; sent *them strong
Delusions, that they should believe a Lie; Left
them to their reprobate Mind; And given them
the Spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see,
and ears that they should not hear.* It is Sin which has so much provok'd him, that he has dismay'd, terrify'd, and disturb'd their Consciences, gall'd and wounded them with Reproaches, rais'd in them a vast many Scruples, and pursued them with Checks, Remorses, and a *Worm that shall not die*: That he has disquieted their Hearts with Amazements, Fears and Terrors; vex'd them with Misgivings, Confusion and Anguish, and afflicted them with Starts, Quakings and Despair; that he has distracted their Wills with Inconstancy and Changeableness, which makes them always uneasy, and put in them a multitude of Desires, that continually persecute them; that he has laid up in their Memories the dismal Remembrance of their horrible Crimes, which are to be follow'd by dreadful Punishments, and stor'd 'em with several Instances of the Severity of his Justice, with the Threatnings of his Word, and with grievous Thoughts about the End of their Lives, and the Eternity of Shame, Misery and Torments that expects them: That he has match'd their Passions with Disorder, Trouble, Disturbance,

bance, and Restlessness, and caus'd 'em to oppose, to torment, and to destroy one another ; and that he has made the Members of their Bodies liable to a world of Accidents, to many Inconveniences, to several Diseases, and to grievous Sufferings. These are the Judgments which Sin brings upon Mankind during this Life : Tho' dreadful, yet they are not comparable to those that are to follow after Death.

CHAP. VII.

The horrible and eternal Punishments which the wicked shall endure after Death.

THE Scripture expresseth the Punishments which the wicked shall then endure by Death, *The wages of sin is death* ; ^{Rom. 6.} *By a curse, By an unquenchable fire, By a furnace of fire, By an everlasting fire, By a worm that dieth not, And by a lake of fire burning with brimstone.* ^{Matt. 25. 41. 3. 12. 13. 50. 25. 41.} These Expressions give us ^{Mark 9.} frightful Hints of these Punishments, for Death ^{44.} here intimates not only the Deprivation of ^{Rev. 19.} all Happiness, and a State of Horror, Dark-^{20.} ness and Destruction, but likewise a deep Misery and terrible Sufferings ; and the Curse of God denotes his exceedingly great Hatred, his dreadful Wrath, and an extream Indignation : And a Worm that dieth not, an unquenchable, an everlasting Fire ; a Furnace and a Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone, represent to us, the continual, the ex-

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cessive, the acutest, and the eternal Torments of Hell: And so the Damned shall not only be deprived of God's most precious Love, the Source of all Felicity, the Fountain of all Good, the Spring of all Glory, and the inexhaustible Treasure of all Riches; be excluded from Heaven, the place of an infinite and everlasting Bliss; an endless Kingdom full of immortal Crowns, of exceeding great Honours, and of an unspeakable delight; and the Abode both of the blessed Angels, and of the glorified Souls; and be reav'd of all manner of Blessings, even of the least Shadow of Hope ever to enjoy any Happiness: But besides, both their Bodies and Souls shall suffer the most exquisite Torments.

There will be no Limb, no Joint, no part in their Bodies, but will be full of the acutest Pain, and all the Faculties of their Souls will be seiz'd upon by Horror, Amazement, by Fury, Despair, Anguish; distracted by a dreadful Disorder, and unexpressible Confusion; cover'd with Shame, Reproaches, Infamy, and overwhelm'd with a world of unspeakable Griefs and Troubles. The Remembrance of what's past, the re-calling to Mind their odious Offences, and horrid Crimes, the deceitful Gladness and Content they have had, the false Goods they have possess'd, the treacherous Pleasures they have enjoy'd, the vain Glory they have been sed withal, and the chimerical Honours they have pursued with the greatest Eagerness; as well as their re-collecting the many Blessings they have abus'd, the great Graces they have rejected, the precious Promises they have made no

account of, the Exhortations whereof they have taken no notice, the Threatnings they have laugh'd at, and the Punishments they have harden'd themselves against: Besides the Consideration of the infinite Glory, and of the Supreme Felicity the Faithful shall be rais'd to and blessed with, and of the wonderful Triumph gotten over all their Enemies by Jesus Christ, in whom they would not believe, and whose Laws they have so much trampled upon; the Thoughts of their having lost by their fault vast Riches, unspeakable Pleasures, immortal Crowns, and of their being plunged, by reason of their Wickedness, into an Abyss of Misery, Despair, and Horrors, and the reflecting upon an endless Deprivation of all Happiness, and upon an Eternity of the keenest Torments, will torture 'em in a most direful manner, sink 'em in the deepest Sorrow, and bring upon 'em an unexpressible Agony: Then, then, and to all Eternity, there will be insignificant Repentings, Weepings, Crying and Bemoanings, as well as a most better bewailing, a lamentable wringing of Hands, a dismal gnashing of Teeth, and an horrible belching out Blasphemies against their Supreme Judge; whilst all the Sluices of God's dreadful Displeasure and Vengeance will be for ever open'd upon them; whilst his Indignation, more insupportable than all the Torments we have any notion of, whilst his hand heavier than Mountains, and his Wrath hotter than the most violent Fire, shall fall and rush on those lost Wretches, and overwhelm them. Thus you see, how heavy, hard, ungrateful
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and cruel the Yoke of Sin is, what wretched, lamentable and dreadful Condition it brings Men to, even in this Life, and what direful Reward it bestows upon them, when they pass from Time into Eternity. But let us leave off so sad, so melancholy, so deplorable a Subject, and consider another full of Comfort, Delight, and Satisfaction, I mean the blessed Yoke of our dear Saviour Jesus Christ, and of Virtue, his glorious Image.

C H A P. VIII.

What Jesus Christ and Virtue requires of us.

NOW what does our Lord command us? *To Love.* Whom? *God*, the best, the most excellent, the wisest, the most amicable, and the perfectest of all Beings whatsoever; that has lov'd us first, whose Power, has created us, whose Providence does preserve us, whose Goodness is the Origine of all the Blessings, and all the Comforts we enjoy. What else does he enjoyn us? *To Love.* Whom besides God? *Our Neighbours*, who are Branches of the same Trunk, and Streams of the same Source we come of; whose Nature is the same as ours, for we all have been made of one Blood; and we all are indued with a rational Soul, and the same Image of the Divine Mind is imparted to us all in common. Does he not require something further? Yes, he will have us love our selves

1 John 4.
19.

Acts 17.
26.

selves so well as to do all that lies in our Power to perfect our Nature, that by him we may be found worthy to be admitted into the most glorious, and the happiest of all Abodes, the Kingdom of Heaven, full of everlasting Treasures, and of endless Honours; and abounding with Pleasures, that far from surfeiting, grow sweeter and sweeter, still more pleasant and delicious, as they are enjoy'd : Where our Sight shall be blessed with a glorious Light, that shall never be succeeded by any Darkness, and our Ears with a most ravishing Melody, that shall never be interrupted by Complaints, bitter Cries, by Groans and Lamentations; our Hearts with the unspeakably delectable Sensation of God's Love, our Minds with the unexpressible Satisfaction of conversing with his holy Angels, and where our whole Persons, both Bodies and Souls, shall be Partakers of greater Blessings than it is possible for us to conceive. Now what does Virtue require? *To live soberly, righteously and godly*; to be thankful to our great Creator and Benefactor, to pay him our most religious Homages, and to obey chearfully his Commandments: *To do as we would that men should do to us*; *To render to all their dues, to be temperate, discreet, and holy*. Tit. 2. 12. Luk. 6. 31. Rom. 13. 7.

Why does Virtue require of us these things? That we may be happy both in this Life and in the next. Thus you see that what Jesus Christ enjoyns us, and what Virtue demands of us, come to the same thing, *i. e.* to Love, and that they have the same End, which is our Felicity: Wherefore since all the Commandments of our blessed Lord, and all the Precepts

Precepts of Virtue may be reduced to one, which is to Love ; it is very worth our while, to examine the Nature of that Love, as well as its Properties, and the admirable Effects it produces.

C H A P. IX.

The Nature of Love, its Effects and Advantages.

Love or Charity is a natural Affection, which having its Origine and Seat in the Heart, does unite itself so closely to it, and grows so powerful therein, that it takes Possession of its Thoughts and its Desires, and becomes the great Spring, and the chief Principle of our Actions, which consequently are either sinful or virtuous, according as the Objects, it makes use of, happen to be: All the other Affections having their first Rise, and their Strength from that Root, they grow bad or good, as they are influenced by it ; wherefore if Love takes Goodness for its Object, both its Trunk and its Branches have a Tendency to that Goodness: And so God being the Source of all Goodness, is the true, the proper, the peculiar Object of Love, and should be the Foundation thereof, and the greatest Inducement to it, as well as its only Center. Now as the Rays which proceed from that Center, do act and quicken many Creatures, we are bound to love them, but that Love must be kindled by the Rays that issue from the Center of that Supreme Good.

Goodness. Such Love as that is properly what the Scripture calls Charity.

Now when that Charity is possess'd of our Hearts, it expands it self into all Virtues, and drives Vice away. It spreads into all Virtues, for it induces a Man to be pious, devout, and religious, to serve God faithfully, and with chearfulness; to prefer him to all his Creatures, even to his own Life, and makes his Love reign in his Heart, in his Soul, and in his Mind. It renders him just, upright, sincere, merciful and compassionate: It engages him to be of a publick and generous Spirit, and to apply himself, as much as he can, to the general Good and Happiness of Mankind. It disposes him to display the Charms of Liberality and Bountifulness towards them, and to be an Asserter and a Defender of the Truth, but yet inclinable to credit whatever may be said in behalf of his Neighbours, and to hope well of them. It persuades him to lead a temperate Life, to have great Patience, and to be very modest. It cuts off all wicked Partiality, as well as all selfish Narrowness of Spirit, from whence spring Wrongs, Injustices, and Self-conceit- edness: It drives away Vice, for it banishes from him Envy, Malice and Revenge; It shames Glorifying and Haughtiness; it subdues Pride, Ambition, and Lust; it conquers Avarice and Self-Interest; it cools Passion and Anger, and it will not suffer us to misconstrue our Neighbour's Actions, and to entertain wrongfully ill Opinions of 'em: That Charity aims at the producing all these blessed Effects; that it spreads into all Virtues, and

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drives Vice away, is very plain by the Scripture, which powerfully recommends to us all the Virtues above-mention'd, and exhorts us with all the earnestness possible, to destroy the aforesaid Vices.

Matt. 22. 37, 38, 39. Now the holy Scripture tells us, *That all the Law and the Prophets hang on these two Commandments, the first is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; And the second like unto it is, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self; That it is the Principle of Obedience; That love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned, is the end of the Commandment, i. e. of the Law; and that all the Law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self; That love is the Bond of Perfectness; and relating its excellent Properties, and its Averseness from Vice, the Scripture says, Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not, vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Besides there are very great Advantages that do attend Charity: It propitiates for our Crimes, it averts God's Judgments from us, and appeases his Anger against our Sins; for St. Peter assures us, *That Charity shall cover a multitude of Sins.* It intitles us to the Comforts, and the Blessings of God, to his Protection, to his Love, and consequently to his Glory, and his Felicity. *Let them that love thy name, says David, be joyful in thee; and*
again,

again, *They shall prosper that love thee:* For^{cxxii. 6.}
 thermore, *The Lord preserveth all those that*^{cxlv. 20.}
love him; and Jesus Christ says, *If any man*^{John 14.}
love me, my Father will love him; and once^{23.}
 more, *I love them that love me;* riches and^{Prov. 8.}
 honour are with me, yea, durable riches and^{17, 18.}
 righteousness: And St. James declares that,
The Lord has promis'd the crown of life and his^{Jam. 1. 12.}
Kingdom, to them that love him. Three other^{2. 5.}
 great Advantages of Love are these: Its be-
 ing the Soul of Faith, its inducing us to per-
 form God's Commandments, and its freeing
 us from Fear; for St. Paul tells us, *That Faith*^{Gal. 5. 6.}
worketh by love, and Jesus Christ intimates,
That it is the cause of our obeying his Precepts.^{John 14.}
There is no fear in love, says St. John, *perfect*^{1 John 4.}
love casteth out fear.^{18.}

Moreover, Love conquers the exceeding
 great Reluctances we find in our corrupt
 Nature, for the forsaking of our Vices, and
 for the weaning our Affections from this
 World. It reconciles us to those Precepts
 Men look upon as hard, even as unpractica-
 ble, and it renders the Practice of them, not
 only tolerable, but also easy, even pleasant
 and delectable. Love powerfully engages us
 to have an intire Confidence in God's most
 gracious and infinitely wise Providence, that
 disposes of all Events as he thinks fit, and
 orders them to *work together for our good.* It^{Rom. 8.}
 induces us to avoid carefully all that's con-^{28.}
 trary to our Salvation, and to do our best
 Endeavour to *be perfect, as our father which is*^{Matt. 5.}
in heaven is perfect. Love is a strong Cement^{48.}
 whereby Men may be well united, an excel-
 lent Observer of Right and Equity, the best

Keeper of Order and Peace, and a powerful Inducer to the Obedience of God's Commandments. Love has another admirable Property, which is the recommending to God the Good we do, tho' it be mix'd with a great deal of Imperfection, and the ingaging him to accept of, and to reward it, with an eternal Happiness. Thus you see, that Love is a very natural Act, an excellent Quality, an Affection of an absolute necessity, and the most noble of all Virtues, and therefore it will be admitted into Heaven, and indure to all Eternity. As the Faithful go out of this World, most of the other Virtues leave 'em for ever, but Love, or Charity, attends them into the Kingdom of Heaven: I say, That most of the other Virtues leave the Faithful, when they depart this Life; the reason of it is evident, for being founded either on our own Misery, or on the Misery of our Neighbours, they must needs cease to be, when the World is at an End; because there will be no Misery in Heaven, and the Misery in Hell shall never be reliev'd by any means whatsoever; wherefore they shall be abolish'd. Now, that most of the other Virtues are grounded either upon our own Misery, or on the Misery of other People, is plain; for Faith is founded upon our want of an Heavenly Knowledge, Hope upon our Need, Repentance upon our Sins, Humility upon our Imperfections, Patience upon our Sufferings, Continence and Sobriety are Remedies against carnal Appetites, and Courage against Fear. Liberality has for its Foundation the Indigence of our Neighbours; Compassion,

either

either their Grievs, their Troubles, or their Afflictions; and Forbearance, either their Failings, or their Infirmities, or their Wickedness. Love will be in Heaven the chief, and perhaps the only Law, that excellent, that noble, that admirable, that divine Virtue shall reign for ever in that glorious and eternal Kingdom. *Charity never faileth*, says S. Paul, *but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail, whether there be tongues, they shall cease, whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. Now abideth Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greatest of these is Charity.* The Pre-eminence of that Virtue over the two others, will evidently appear, if what St. John asserts in his first Epistle is duly consider'd. He declares, *That Love is not only of God, but moreover, That he who loveth not, knoweth not God*; the reason of it he subjoyns; *For, says he, God is Love*: Again, *He who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.* Thus you see, that by the means of Love, we know God and we possess him, and he possesses us. Now by possessing God we possess the true, and the natural Object of Love, *i. e.* the Source of all Goodness, as well as the Origine of all Righteousness, and the Fountain of all Wisdom; and by being possess'd by him we become Virtuous and Perfect, which is all that the Law of the Gospel requires of us. Furthermore, The Eminency of Love or Charity will be very apparent, if we consider, that Love is the chiefest and the noblest part of God's Image in us, which Faith and Hope are not in the least, because neither of 'em is found in God, for there is no Being above Him to be the Object

ject of his Faith, and as he is perfectly happy in himself he hopes for no Felicity.

C H A P. X.

The Objects of Love.

HAVING thus consider'd Love, the Director of our Thoughts, the Promoter of our Words, and the Soul of our Actions, let us now see, which are the proper Objects of that powerful Affection. It is of the greatest Consequence for our being made virtuous, perfect and happy, not only to have a true Notion of Love, but also to be well acquainted with its true Objects, and to know how to apply it to them; for as all our Vices, and consequently our Dissatisfactions, and all our Misery, issue from our disordinate and unruly Love; so our Virtues, and by consequence our Content and our Felicity, proceed from an orderly and well regulated Love: Did we but love, as we ought to do, all would be very well with us, but alas! we love cordially what we should not love, I mean insensible Creatures, which are not able to have the least Affection for us; and we love not heartily God who lov'd us first, and who is the Author of all the Blessings we enjoy, and the Giver of a glorious Immortality. We love that which does corrupt our Nature, and which is our Ruin, *i. e.* unlawful Pleasures, a vain Glory, and the ill Customs and wicked Practices of this World; and we love not God,

God, who sanctifies and perfects our Nature, who is the Author of our Salvation, and the Source of all our Happiness: We love Men for reasons taken from our Corruption, but not from the Image of the Supreme Goodness, which we may see in them; wherefore it was of an absolute necessity, both to our Temporary and to our Eternal Welfare, to have our Love take its due and requisite course; now the blessed Yoke of Jesus Christ does bend that governing Affection towards the most excellent, and the noblest of all its Objects, and towards rational Creatures, proportionably as the Image of the Supreme Goodness is seen in them; I say, That the Yoke of our Lord does incline our Love towards God, for it brings us to the Knowledge of a Being so Good, so Just, so Wise, so Merciful, in a word, so Perfect, that whenever our unruly Passions cease raging and are silent, our Heart can't refuse him our intire Love. It sets our Understandings aright, by ingaging us to consider, that being the Author of our Life, and all our excellent Faculties, as well as of all the Comforts, and of all the Blessings we enjoy, he well deserves to be prefer'd to every thing whatsoever. It induces us to reflect upon the unexpressible Misery, and the dreadful Torments we were doom'd to and deliver'd from, by his unspeakable Charity, through his beloved Son, as well as upon the eternal Glory, the inexhaustible Riches, and the everlasting Pleasures purchas'd unto us by his infinite Bountifulness through our blessed Lord Jesus; for, says St. Paul, *God who is rich in mercy for his great love, where-* Eph. 2. 5, 6, 7.
with

with he loved us, even when we were dead in Sins, has quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through
 John 2.16. *Jesus Christ; and St. John, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Besides, by that blessed Yoke, we are drawn into the way of Godliness which leadeth to a glorious Immortality, and we are made to run the way, and to go in the paths of his Commandments, whereby we serve, we worship, and we adore his infinite, eternal, and most glorious Majesty, and we praise, we bless, and we extol his unspeakable Love towards Mankind, which intitles us to a Glory, and to a Happiness that may be possess'd and enjoy'd, but never express'd nor conceiv'd.*

Pf. 119.
32, 25.

Now be pleased to judge, whether there's the least reason to say, that the Yoke of Jesus Christ is too hard and too severe in that respect, and whether, on the contrary, it is not very natural and just, fitting and expedient to love intirely the Source of all Goodness, the Author of all the admirable Faculties we are endow'd with, and the Fountain of all the Blessings we enjoy in this Life, as well as of the Supreme Felicity we shall be partakers of to all Eternity; and consequently to take all the care we can to please him, by a Behaviour suitable to his holy Will; to have Thoughts convenient to his Children, to speak to his Praise and Glory, and to act as much

as in us lies for his Service. Were our Passions less noisy, and our Reason better hearken'd to, doubtless our Self-Love would powerfully induce us to love with all our Heart so amiable an Object, in whom all Perfections are to be found, even in the highest degree, and from whom all the Goodness, all the Wisdom, all the Righteousness, all the Power, all the Holiness of Angels and Men, have their Spring.

2dly, The Yoke of our blessed Lord does incline our Love towards rational Creatures, proportionably as the Image of the Supreme Goodness is seen in them. Now the rational Creatures are either Angelical or Human. As to the first, tho' there is no Injunction in the Gospel to love them, yet I see no reason why we should not love in this Life, those whom we shall certainly love for ever in the next: But as to the others, there is a very express, positive, and urgent Law in that Gospel to love 'em as ourselves. I need not repeat what I have already quoted; I only observe, that this Evangelical Law plainly intimates, that our Self-Love is to be the Rule whereby we are to Love our Neighbours, and that therefore, it is very requisite to shew how we ought to love our selves according to the Precepts of the holy Gospel; for indeed without putting them in practice, Man can't be said to love himself as he should do; on the contrary it may be truly asserted, that he is to himself the most dangerous of his Enemies, and that if he be depriv'd of a quiet, sweet, and happy Life, expos'd to many fatal Accidents, liable to a world of Sorrows,

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and

and subject to a great Misery, to numberless Afflictions, and to horrible Anguishes, he must lay the fault upon himself; for his inordinate and unruly Passions are the true Cause of the Bitterness, and of the Torments of this Life: From whence come most of his Distempers and Diseases, several of his Misfortunes, and very often his intire Ruin, but from his Intemperance and Debaucheries? What draws upon him a world of Troubles, Mortifications, Grievs, Disgraces, and Disappointments, but Ambition? What loads him with Shame, Infamy, Reproach and Confusion, but Pride? What occasions him Discontents, carking Cares, Mistrusts, Suspicions, and abundance of Losses, but Covetousness? Wherefore it was of an absolute necessity to give him Rules, whereby he might love himself as he ought to do. Now it is what the holy Gospel has most happily performed: For its Precepts engage Man to have for himself the truest and the sincerest Love; whereby he is aware of Intemperance, which impairs his Estate, ruins his Health, shortens his Life, confounds and besots his Mind, which lets loose his Passions, spurs him on to Disputes, Quarrels and Murders; induces him to Luxury, Riot, and Lasciviousness, and makes him forget what he owes to God, to his Neighbours, and to himself; and whereby he cherishes Sobriety, which improves his Estate, preserves his Health, prolongs his Days, and keeps his Mind free from Confusion and Disorder, clear and serene, as well as apt to perform its noble Functions, which curbs his Passions, inclines him

him to Peace, restrains his Concupiscence, and gives him a free Scope to think of his Duties towards his Maker, his Brethren and Himself; whereby Man is induced to forsake his Vices, which estrange him from God, his Supreme Judge, and corrupt his Nature; which deface in his Soul all his Glory, I mean God's Image, and kindle against him the dreadful Wrath of his Supreme Judge: Whereby he is persuaded to humble himself before Almighty God, the Source of all Perfections, to acknowledge his Infirmities, his Faults and Unworthiness; to own that he is but a poor wretched Creature, uncapable without an heavenly Assistance of getting out of his unexpressible Misery; and whereby he is mov'd to have his Recourse to the infinite Merits of his blessed Saviour, by whose means he may be saved. Now, that Repentance and Humility are absolutely necessary in order to be made happy, is an undoubted Truth; for, says Jesus Christ in St. Matthew, *Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*; and in St. Luke, *Except ye repent ye shall all perish*; again, *Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted*; and St. James declares, *That God resisteth the proud, but that he gives grace unto the humble*. Matt. 18.
3. 4.
Luke 13.
3. 18. 14.
Jam. 4. 6

That well-ruled Love moves him to wean his Heart from this World, which is uncapable to give him a perfect Contentment, and to make him truly happy; and to be faithful to Jesus Christ, tho' his Fidelity to that blessed Lord should draw upon him a dreadful Persecution,

secution, and prove his Death, because he is the Author of a glorious Immortality, the giver of eternal Crowns, and the Source of a Supreme Felicity. *Love not the world*, says
 1 John 2. St. John, *neither the things that are in the*
 15, 16. *World: If any man love the world, the love of the*
Father is not in him; for all that is in the
World, The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the
eye, and the pride of life, is not of the father,
but is of the world. And our blessed Saviour,
 Matt. 16. *If any Man will come after me, let him deny*
 24, 25, 26. *himself, and take up his cross and follow me;*
For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, and
whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find
it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain
the whole world and lose his own soul? or what
shall a man give in exchange for his soul? Again,
 Rev. 2. 10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee*
 2 Tim. 2. *a Crown of life. And St. Paul declares, That*
 11, 12. *if we be dead in him, we shall also live with*
him: If we suffer we shall also reign with him.
 Our Self-Love regulated by the Injunctions of
 the Gospel, presses us very much to *work out*
our Salvation with fear and trembling; To abhor
 Phil. 2. *that which is evil, and to cleave to that which*
 12. *is good; To walk worthy of the vocation where-*
 Rom. 12. *with we are called, with all lowliness and meek-*
 9. *ness; To cleanse our selves from all filthiness of*
 Eph. 4. 1. *the flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear*
 2. *of God; To seek those things which are above,*
 2 Cor. 7. *where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; To*
 1. *make without any delay, our Peace with*
 Col. 3. 1. *our Supreme Judge, and to do our utmost*
Endeavours in order to please him, that we
may avert from us his dreadful Judgments,
and be partakers of his unspeakable Felicity.

Such

Such ought to be our Love for our Neighbours, *i. e.* for all Men, even for our Enemies. The want of which occasions a world of Disputes, Quarrels, and Disorders, and leaves a full latitude to Frauds and Injustices, to Unmercifulness and Cruelties, to Detraction and Calumnies. But the having a Love regulated by the Precepts of the Gospel, powerfully induces us to be kindly affectioned one to another, *To live if possible, as much as lieth in us, peaceably with all men; To feed our Enemy if he hunger, and to give him drink if he thirst, and to do all the good we can to our Neighbours.* Now as they are compos'd both of a Body and of a Soul, all the Advantages we are able to procure them, may be reduced into two Classes. One respects the Body, and the other concerns the Soul. As to the first, the Law of Charity engages us to preserve, as much as lieth in us, their Healths and their Lives, and to contribute to their Prosperity; to help, to protect, and to defend the Poor; to visit, to relieve, and to comfort the Sick and the Afflicted, according to our Power and Abilities. *By love serve one another, says St. Paul: Again, Gal. 5. 13. To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with such Sacrifices God is well pleas'd; and St. James, Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions. Jesus Christ tells us in St. Matthew, of the unspeakable Happiness, and exceeding great Glory of bountiful People. Come ye blessed of my father, will that Supreme Judge say to them, when he renders to every man according to his deeds,* Rom. 12. 10, 18, 20.

says

Matt. 25. says St. Paul. *Come ye blessed of my father, in-
34, 35, 36. herit the kingdom prepared for you from the foun-
dation of the world. For I was an hungred, and
ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me
drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in:
Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye vi-
sited me: I was in Prison, and ye came unto
me.*

As to their Soul, the Law of Charity obli-
ges us to pray heartily for their Salvation,
to convince them of the deplorable Condition
Sin has reduced them to, and to reclaim
them from their ill Courses, by sound Ad-
vices, prudent Exhortations, earnest Intrea-
ties, and timely Reproofs. *Warn them that
1 Theff. 5. are unruly, says St. Paul; and St. James, Let
14. him know, that he which converteth the sinner
from the error of his way, shall save a soul from
death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins. That
Law of Charity ingages us to induce 'em to
be humble, modest, and temperate; to in-
struct carefully the ignorant, of the indispen-
sible Duties of Religion; to remove Scruples
and Doubts, which disturbs poor Souls, and
keep 'em in suspence, and to settle those
whose Minds are troubled in the Temper they
should be in. It urges us to persuade 'em
to despise the vain Glory of this World, and
to detest its wicked Customs, ill Practices,
and bad Principles; to loath its sinful Plea-
sures, and to wean their Hearts from its
Riches; to have a strict Union with their
Saviour, to serve him faithfully, and to obey
with care his Commandments; To set their
Col. 3. 2. affection on things above, and to make as soon
as possible their Peace with God, in whose
Power,*

Power, is Death and Life, Damnation and Salvation. Finally it requires of us, to excite and to encourage 'em, not only by word of Mouth, but likewise by good Examples, to perform Acts of Godliness, to do Works of Charity, and to apply themselves to the Sanctification of their Souls. These are the best Services that can be done, and the greatest Advantages that can be procured; for they aim both at our Temporary Happiness, and at our Eternal Felicity: Wherefore we should take all the Care possible, and addict our selves diligently to do such Services, to get such Advantages to our Relations, Friends, and Neighbours.

C H A P. XI.

*That to be under the Yoke of Jesus Christ
is our present, and will be our future
Happiness and Glory.*

NOW let any Man consider impartially the Yoke of Sin, and the Yoke of Jesus Christ, and let him declare, whether what his Gospel demands of us, is not incomparably easier, more agreeable to Nature, and pleasanter, as well as exceedingly more Satisfactory, safer, more advantageous, and fuller of Comforts, even in this World, than what Sin requires of us; and whether consequently it is not less troublesome and difficult to go to Heaven, than to hurry our selves into Hell. I carry on the thing further; let him

him declare, whether it is not our present, and whether it will not be our future Happiness and Glory, to be under the Yoke of our Lord Jesus Christ, when he has duly consider'd,

First, That the taking his Yoke upon us, *i. e.* our observing his Commandments, contributes very much to the preserving of our Health, without which we can't be happy, had we all the Riches, all the Conveniences, all the Friends, all the Credit, all the Preferments, and all the Dignities, that our Hearts could desire; for the keeping our Lord's Commandments drives away Intemperance, which breeds many Distempers, and entertains Sobriety, which foment a good Constitution, and conduces to the restoring of bad ones: It bridles our unruly Passions, which disorder our Bodies, and renders us gentle, mild, moderate, and content, which settles in us a sweet Tranquility, and consequently helps us very much to the preserving of our Health.

When he has well consider'd, Secondly, That our Obedience to his Law engages us to put off our Vices, as Idleness, Sensuality and Pride, which either make us neglect our Interest, or induce us to squander away our Goods, and that it renders us diligent, careful, prudent and laborious, and brings down upon us Blessings from Heaven, and consequently avails mightily to the preserving, and to the increasing of our Substance, as well as to the enjoying of it with Contentment and Cheerfulness.

When

When he has rightly consider'd, Thirdly, That the observing his Precepts makes us wise. *Now Wisdom*, says the wisest of Kings, shall promote us, bring us to honour, give to our head an ornament of grace, and deliver to us a crown of glory: That it renders us just, upright, honest, good-natur'd, generous and bountiful, which gains us the Affection, and the Esteem of our Neighbours; that it helps us to rid our selves of our Prejudices, which draw us into many Absurdities, Inconveniences and Misfortunes, as well as to improve and to enlighten our Understandings; to rule well our Wills, and to direct their Desires to the Glory of God, to the Good of our Neighbours, and to our own Advantage; to store our Memories with comfortable Notions, to renew in us the Image of our Creator, to conform our selves to his Holiness; in short, to raise our Nature to as great a height of Perfection as our Infirmities will permit it.

Finally, when he has seriously consider'd, that by taking the Yoke of our blessed Jesus upon us, I mean, by submitting our selves to his Laws, by observing them carefully, and by following his Doctrine; we get for the Life to come unspeakable Advantages, and we gain an exceedingly great Reward, and we obtain a most glorious Kingdom; for when our Souls leave this World, they shall be admitted into Paradise, an Abode of an unutterable Bliss, where there will be no Darkness, but a perpetual Light; no Grief, no Affliction, but unexpressible Joys and Pleasures; no Misery, but an exceedingly great Happiness; no Anguish, no Dissatisfac-

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faction,

but ineffable Comforts, and a perfect Contentment; no War, no Contention, no Struggling, but a lasting Peace, a good Intelligence, and an admirable Concord; no Ignominy, no Reproach, no Disgrace, but Honour, Esteem and Glory. And when our Bodies rise again, God will render their Union with their Souls, not only everlasting, but likewise the most intimate, the pleasantest, the most agreeable, the sweetest, and the most perfect. He will be pleased to keep for ever betwixt them a wonderful liking, and admirable Sympathy, a lovely Correspondence, and a delightful Harmony. *Then*

Rev. 7. 17.

we shall hunger no more, says St. John, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun light on us, nor any heat, for the lamb shall feed us, and shall lead us unto living fountains of waters: And

Rev. 21.

4.

God shall wipe all tears from our eyes, and there shall be no more death; neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain. On the contrary, we shall be blessed with a perfect Satisfaction, and a glorious Immortality. We shall be allowed to enrich our selves with the Treasures of his Grace, to partake of his Eternal Glory, to enjoy his Supreme Felicity, and to adorn our Souls with his Divine Perfections. The Love of God towards us, having no Bounds, the Blessings and the Favours he will bestow upon us to all Eternity shall have no Measure neither. He will make our Bodies as perfect as it is possible for them to be, render them purer and brighter than the Sun, bless their Eyes with the most desirable sight of our glorious Redeemer, with an eternal, most pure, and exceedingly delightful

lightful Light, issuing out of that wonderful Sun of Righteousness ; their Ears with a most ravishing Melody, and all their other Senses with all the Delight, and all the Pleasure they are capable of. As to our Souls, God will make 'em by degrees as pure, as holy, as glorious, as knowing, as powerful, as happy, as the Archangels and the Cherubims are ; render us as like himself, as the Finite can be like the Infinite, communicate to them as much of his Perfections, as their Nature can permit ; enlighten their Understandings, perfect their Wills, sanctify their Affections, and adorn their Memories with the most glorious Notions : In short God's Power and Bountifulness will never cease operating in our behalf, till they have rais'd us to the highest pitch of Perfection our Nature can reach, and made us as happy as limited Beings can be.

C H A P. XII.

Objections made against the easiness or Gentleness of our Lord's Yoke, and the Answers.

IT must then be acknowledg'd, that the blessed Yoke of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ, is not only easy, agreeable to our Reason, very iust, fitting to our State, and most honourable, but also aiming at the general Good of Mankind, tending to the pub-

lick and to the particular Peace and Tranquillity, exceedingly advantageous to every body, and driving both at the Safety of our own Persons, and at the securing of our own Substance, as well as at the quieting our Consciences, and at the making us happy to all Eternity. It may be said that indeed the Commandments mention'd concerning the three Objects of our Charity, are very reasonable and not difficult to perform, but that there are several others very austere, rigorous, hard, painful and burdensome; *As to humble*

Jam. 4. 10. ourselves, to be patient in tribulation, to repent,
1 Pet. 5. 6 to love our enemies, &c. to believe things which
Rom. 12. eye has not seen, nor ear heard; neither have en-
12. tred into the heart of man; And to set our affecti-
Matt. 3. ons on them, and not on things on the earth. It
2. 5, 44. is positively said in the Acts, That we must
1 Cor. 2 through tribulation enter into the Kingdom of
9. God. Jesus Christ shews plainly, that it is
Col. 3. 2. very difficult to be saved, when he says, Strait
Acts 14. is the gate, and narrow is the way, which lead-
22. eth unto life; when he declares, That whoso-
Matth. 7. ever does not forsake all that he hath, and hateth
14. not his father and mother, and wife, and children,
Luke 14. and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life,
33. cannot be his disciple; and when he bids us,
26. Deny our selves, and take up his cross, and follow
Matt. 16. him; and when he requires of us, To lose our
24. lives for his sake. I confess that these things
16. 25. which the Gospel absolutely demands of us
seem, at the first sight, very hard and unrea-
sonable, most grievous, and even unpractica-
ble; but when they are duly weigh'd, they
don't appear so at all; on the contrary, they
are found to be very just, exceedingly pro-
fitable,

fitable, most prosperous, and very feasible; which I hope to be able to prove evidently.

First, The Gospel exacts, that we should be humble; now this, far from being hard, is very requisite, as my Reader will be very sensible of, if he considers, first, that Humility is a Virtue, whereby we may become great, and perfect our Nature; a Virtue which is the ready way to attain Honour and Glory, one of the properest means to render our selves acceptable to God, and an admirable Expedient, to get both the Esteem, and the Love of good People: A Virtue which makes us apt to take good Advice, easy to be intreated, and fit to deal withal; a Virtue which prepares those that are indued with it, to receive from God with a becoming Resignation, any Event which his Providence shall think fit to permit, which contains them within their own Sphere, and secures a favourable Condescension towards their Inferiors, a greater Regard for their Equals, and a due Submission to their Superiors; a Virtue which is an admirable Observer of Peace, a good Preserver of Order, and a strict Keeper of Unity. If we consider, Secondly, That Pride renders Men fretful, peevish, and captious, rash in their Judgments, and severe in their Censures, as well as apt to be provok'd, extreamly jealous of being slighted, conceited of themselves, and always discontented with the Dispensations of God's Providence, which disquiets their Minds, disturbs their Peace, and grieves their Hearts, and which brings upon them, not only the Contempt and the Hatred of every Body,

Jam. 4. 6. Body, but likewise the Indignation and the Judgment of God ; *Who, says St. James, resists the proud,* by asserting against them his Glory, by maintaining the Right of their Neighbours, and by letting them know to their Cost, how vain and how perillous an Attempt it is, to take too much upon themselves, and to derogate from his Honour, and to deprive their fellow Creatures of their Due.

Secondly. The Gospel requires of us to be patient, which far from being hard, is very reasonable, and suits mighty well with our Condition, for Patience arms us against a multitude of Mischiefs, which frequently break in upon us, and helps us to overcome them. It fortifies and supports us in our Afflictions, which are the Remedies God often makes use of, for the curing of the Soul, and no less necessary to its Welfare, than Physick is for the good Disposition of the Body. It prepares us to receive Injuries without Perturbation: It restrains Anger and Precipitation commonly attended with many Inconvenienc^{es}, and sometimes with great Misfortunes, and when some Adversity has overtaken us, that Virtue enables us to bear it with evenness of Mind, and persuades us to submit our selves intirely to the Appointments of God's Providence, which proves a very great Advantage to us, for God whose

2 Cor. 4. 17. Goodness is infinite, orders things so, *That our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ; A glory with which the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared.*

Rom. 8. 18.

compared. But Impatience, far from doing good, does a great deal of harm; far from healing, exasperates; far from driving away Evils, brings them in, far from alleviating our Sorrows, aggravates them; besides Impatience is exceedingly unbecoming those, who by their own fault, have brought Misery upon themselves.

Thirdly. Repentance, which the Christian Religion absolutely requires, gives a great deal of Trouble and Pains, is attended with abundance of Difficulties and Hardships, causes much Sorrow and Anxiety, and excites several Conflicts and Struglings. Its Alterations are extremely unpleasant, and its Demands are very grievous. It requires of us to have a watchful Eye over our Actions, and especially over our Failings, and to keep under our unruly Passions with all the Care possible, to leave off our Vices, to renounce the World with all its Vanities and wicked Customs, and to resist manfully the Temptations of the Devil; to adorn our Souls with Christian Virtues, and to put them diligently in practice. It changes our Joy into Sadness, our Laughter into Weeping, our Pleasures into Vexations, our Merriments into Mourning, our Satisfaction into Discontent. It makes us to grieve and groan, and bewail, for having done what we took a great delight in doing of: It engages us to frame Designs against our darling Passions, to deny their Desires, to check and to mortify them. It moves us to abhor, and to detest what we exceedingly lov'd, I mean, the gratifying of our vicious Inclinations, and to delight in

and cherish that which we carefully avoided, *i. e.* the Sanctification of our Soul: But we must seriously consider, that Repentance is a Condition, without which there is no Hope for Salvation, and so let that Condition be never so hard, we must either submit to it, or quit our Pretensions to Heaven, and resolve to be eternally miserable. Repentance must either make up the Breach which Sin has made in our Soul, or that poor Soul shall unavoidably perish. Now I leave to your Self-Interest to decide which is to be prefer'd, either to repent, or to lose Heaven, and to bring upon us the eternal Damnation of Hell. I don't doubt but that Self-Interest, if it were consulted, would powerfully induce us to accept with Joy of that Condition, and to perform with Care what Repentance demands of us; especially if we should consider, that it is very different from Impenitence, which leaves behind it *a worm that dieth not*, and bitter Grievs, Troubles, Disorder, Disquiet and Anguish, gnawing Reproaches, piercing Remorses, and a dreadful Expectation; for on the contrary, it leaves in our Soul, when it quits us, unspeakable Comforts, the Assurance of God's Pardon, vast Hopes, an unexpressible Content, a great Peace and Tranquility, a Joy and Pleasure, that may be felt but not utter'd. *After the strong wind that rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks; after the earthquake and the fire, comes from God a still small voice, which assures us, that an eternity full of glory and happiness awaits us in heaven.* But after all, where is the Hardship in forsaking a bad Life, which we must have

Mark 9.
46.

1 Kings
19. 11, 12.

have found by Experience, to carry about it much Pain, Sorrow, Shame, and terrible Stings, and which has nothing to indear itself to us, but a seeming Sweetness, which is at last turn'd into Gall, and some deceitful Pleasures, which are chang'd into bitter Grievs, and some false Glory, which is transform'd into Infamy? What Hardships is there, to be obliged to set aright our deprav'd Affections, and our deluded Judgments, to renounce a sensual, extravagant, and mischievous Life, and to demean our selves with Prudence and Discretion? Is it a Hardship to be rid from the Stings of Conscience, the Smart of Guilt, and the Fear of everlasting Torments; recover'd out of the Snare of the Devil, reclaim'd from our ill Courses, which drive us into Perdition; made capable of the Mercy of God, and brought into the way of Righteousness, which leads into the Abode of an Eternal Bliss? Is there any reason to complain of the Hardships of Repentance, since by it we have what's much to be prefer'd to all the Content, and to all the Glory of this World, I mean, the Honour and the Satisfaction of causing Joy in Heaven, for Jesus Christ tells us in St. Luke, *That there shall be joy in heaven in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.* I leave it to the Judgment of any reasonable Man, whether it is not incomparably more honourable, infinitely more satisfactory, and ten thousand times more agreeable to our Self-Interest, to create Joy in Heaven, in making, by a sincere Repentance,

2 Tim. 2. 26.

Luke 15.

7.

penitance, an Addition to the Number of the Blessed, than by continuing in our Impenitency, to cause Joy in Hell, and become

1 Pet. 5. *A prey to the roaring lion, which walks about*
8. *seeking whom he may devour.*

Fourthly, The Christian Religion commands
Matt. 5. *us, To love our enemies, to bless them that curse us,*
44. *to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for*
them which despitefully use us and persecute us.

Now this Precept of cherishing them that hate us, of wishing and doing good to them that imprecate us, and contrive our Ruin; of begging of God to pardon them that abuse, wrong, and torment us, and to give 'em his Grace: This Precept, I say, seems to be very hard, and extreamly difficult, if not impracticable. I own that the Performance of it is not without Difficulties and Obstacles, that the Burden must be heavy and grievous to the Flesh, and that Nature is apt to kick against the Spur, to revolt against Injuries, and that it has need of some very powerful Motives to restrain those Resentments, which ill Usage stirs in our Breasts; but after all, if we duly consider, that it is an honourable Imitation of the perfectest of all Beings, *Who makes his Sun to rise on the evil,*
Matt. 5. *and on the good, and sends rain on the just, and on*
45. *the unjust:* If we rightly ponder what his blessed Son has done in our behalf, what Glory, what Happiness he has left, what Contempt and Injuries he has born, what Misery he has undergone, what Ignominy and Reproach he has been expos'd to, what Agony he has been in, and what Torment, what Death he has suffer'd for us his Enemies;
if

if we take notice of his interceding for those who daily offend him, and of his protecting, assisting, and saving them: If we observe that to return Kindness for ill Treatment, Right for Wrong, Meekness for Severity, Mildness for Inhumanity, Indulgence for Oppression; that to pay a Regard for Disesteem, Respect for Scorn, and construe favourably the Actions of those who make it their Business to blemish our Reputation, is a noble Conquest over our Passions, and shews a great deal of Generosity, an excellent good Temper, and an admirable Magnanimity: If we mark, that often Enemies are brought to themselves, prevail'd upon to alter their Deportment, and engag'd to relent by Lenity, Good-Nature, Charity and Gentleness; but on the contrary, that they are frequently more and more incensed and exasperated, and consequently more troublesome and vexatious, when we requite them in their own way, and return them Evil for Evil: If we reflect upon the solid Satisfaction and lasting Pleasure which Forgiveness affords, upon the Ease, Comfort, and Tranquility, which attends Charity, and upon the Disturbance, the Confusion, the Perplexity, the Disquiet of those who let loose the Reins to Hatred and Revenge, upon the tumultuous Passions they are agitated with, torn and tortur'd by, and upon the unexpressible Inconveniences, Disorders and Misfortunes that follow Uncharitableness: If we seriously consider all these things, we shall find that the Difficulties are not so great as we thought, and that this Commandment is neither too hard nor unreasonable,

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reasonable, but on the contrary, that it is feasible, very just, and most advantageous.

Fifthly. Religion requires of us to believe things, *Which Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, and to set our Affections on them, and not on things on the Earth.* Now where's the difficulty in believing what Truth it self has told us, and what's very agreeable to Reason? Where's the Hardship in taking Pains, in applying our selves, in desiring vehemently to get immense Goods, unspeakable Blessings, vast Riches, a Supreme Felicity, everlasting Crowns, *And an eternal life, which God, that cannot lye, and with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning, has faithfully promised us, and of which he has been pleased to give us in the New Covenant, the strongest Assurances, as well as the most certain Pledges in the Lord's Supper?* Does Religion demand any thing more difficult than that which Sin exacts? Can it be denied but that Ambition, Lust and Covetousness put upon us, at least, as hard Tasks as Religion does? Do they not require of us to take exceeding great Cares, to be at a vast Trouble, to labour under extream Difficulties, to strive as much as we can, to expose our selves to the greatest Dangers, and very often to lose our Lives? And for what? Alas! for a vain Glory, for transitory Pleasures, for deceitful Riches, and sometimes for Goods intirely unknown to us; the Certainty of all which we have all the reason in the World to question. Do they not induce us to depend upon this World, to believe the Performance of its Promises,

Tit. 1. 2.

Jam. 1.

17.

Promises, and to act accordingly, tho' it has frequently disappointed and deceived us? Far from being hard, it is then very reasonable, to believe the things which God has promis'd us, and to set our Affections on them; but not at all, either to trust the World, or to give our selves to its Goods: I add, that there are very great Advantages, even in this Life, in believing what the Gospel requires we should believe, for Christian Faith is a powerful assistance to drive away from our Breasts very troublesome Guests, I mean Revenge, Calumny, Injustice and Covetousness, to keep under Concupiscence, to shame Pride, and to restrain Ambition, which are attended with a world of Mischiefs. It engages us to be sincere, upright and bountiful, to perform our Duties, to do worthy Actions, and to perfect our Nature, which is an unexpressible Satisfaction, and a lasting Pleasure to us; besides, it supports and comforts us in our Afflictions, it removes our Fears, and helps us to live quietly and content; but it is quite otherwise with a worldly Belief, for it breeds all the Vices just now mention'd, and so debases and corrupts our Nature; moreover it is followed by a Multitude of Disappointments, Troubles, Fears and Dissatisfactions: A constant Experience proves what I assert.

Sixthly. It is positively said in the *Acts*, *That we must through Tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God.* I own, that the way to Heaven is not without great Difficulties, for we must as we go to that Abode of Bliss, struggle against the Flesh, which will put us out of it; contend with the World, which presses

presses us to submit to its ill Courses, and strive against the Devil, who does all he can to bring us into the way of Perdition: But is there any reason for us to complain of being obliged to meet with some Impediments, to be at some Trouble, and to overcome some Hardships, in order to enjoy a perfect Happiness, not only for few Years, but for ever and ever, since we do as much, and a great deal more for momentary Trifles, transient Bawbles, and fleeting Days? Far from complaining, we should rather praise and bless God, when he thinks fit to make us Partakers, for a little while, of the Sufferings of his beloved Son, that we may be Partakers of his unspeakable Glory and Happiness: Far from repining at our Tribulation, we should rather exceedingly rejoyce at it, for by brightning our Faithfulness to God, and our Resignation to his Will, it brightens, at the same time, the Eternal Crown which is prepar'd for us in Heaven: But we need not be much concern'd at the Consideration of these Words.

1st. Because they were particularly spoken to the first Christians, surrounded by Heathens, who most cruelly persecuted them, in order to bring 'em back to their former Idolatry which they preached against, with a great deal of Force, and a wonderful Success, and which consequently they were driving away, to their inexpressible Grief.

2^{dly}. Because ~~for~~ One Elect, that suffers Persecution, there are a Hundred free from it. There has always been a world of Men, that in leaving this World, are gone very peaceably into the Abode of Bliss.

3^{dly}. Be-

3dly, Because suffering Persecution for Jesus Christ's sake, is a peculiar Favour follow'd by an extraordinary Degree of Glory, and a singular Measure of Happiness, which God grants but to few of the Elect.

Seventhly, Jesus Christ shews that it is very difficult to be saved, when he says, *That strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life; but, That wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction.* Now why it should be concluded from hence, that the way to Heaven is very rough, extremely painful, and most difficult, and that, on the contrary, the way to Hell is easy, smooth and pleasant, I can't so readily comprehend; for they may as well signify, that the way to Heaven is less known, and by fewer resorted to, than the way to Hell. But after all, let us suppose, that in order to come to the Possession of an immortal Glory, and to the Enjoyment of our Supreme Good, we must for sometime, be expos'd to a vast many Inconveniences, to very great Straits, and to abundance of Difficulties; support the greatest Storms which the Malice of our Enemies can raise, cross the most frightful Forsts which their Rage can drive us to, and go over Mountains as steep and as full of Precipices as they possibly can find; and that, on the contrary, the way to Perdition, and to everlasting Torments, is fine, charming, strew'd with Flowers, and full of Delights. I ask which of these two ways is to be prefer'd? I dare answer, That there is no Man of any Sense and Reason, but would rather chuse to go to a Place full of Blessings, of
lawful

lawful Pleasures, and innocent Diversions, in a tempestuous Weather, and through a bad way, than to a place full of Misery, Trouble, Pain and Anguish, in a delicate Sunshiny Day, and through a charming Road.

8^{thly}. Jesus Christ the Author and the Soul of our Religion requires of us to forsake all that we have, and to hate our Fathers and Mothers, and Wives, and Children, and Brethren, and Sisters, to deny our selves, to take up his Cross and to follow him, even to lose our Lives for his Sake. There lies the grand Objection, but my Reader will be convinc'd, that these Commandments, far from being hard, too severe, and unjust, offensive and prejudicial to our Welfare, are, on the contrary, kind, reasonable, and very advantageous; if we do but consider, without Prejudice and Partiality, that it is a Maxim receiv'd all over the World, and a Practice that has universally obtain'd in all Nations, to part with a small Advantage, in prospect of getting a much greater one: Now our blessed Lord demands of us, *To forsake all that we have, i. e.* to leave by choice, the poor Conveniences, and the sorry Advantages of this Life, which we must otherwise part with by constraint. But why will he have us forsake these Bawbles? That we may be Partakers of the unspeakable Felicity of Heaven, get Eternal Crowns, and possess inexhaustible Treasures. He expects that we shall hate, *i. e.* love less than him, our Parents, and our nearest Relations, and that we shall go from them, and even break the strongest Ties of Kindred and Friendship, whenever his Service and
his

his Glory do require it; *That we should deny our selves, i. e.* renounce our Carnal Mind, which is contrary to his good Will, keep our Self-Love from favouring our Desires, which happen to be disagreeable to his holy Commandments, restrain our Inclinations from gratifying our Flesh, curb our unruly Passions, neglect our greatest Concerns for the good of his Religion, and hinder the Love of Ease from sparing ourselves, when his Gospel demands our Labours. He expects that we shall bear willingly the greatest Hardships, expose our selves to the most imminent Dangers, stand out the Violence of the sharpest Persecution, and even suffer a cruel Death for his Sake. But why does he exact such things?

1st. Because he is the Author of our Being, the Giver of all our Faculties, the Cause of all the Advantages we are possessed of, the Fountain of all the Blessings we enjoy, the Origine of all the Virtues, and of all the good Sciences we are endow'd with, *For in him, says Sr. Paul, are hid all the treasures of wisdom* Col. 2. 3. *and knowledge.* He is the Preserver of our Life, the Cleaner of our Heart, the Saviour of our Soul, the Vanquisher of our implacable Enemies, the Pacifier of God's dreadful Justice, the powerful Intercessor that gets the Pardon of our Sins, and obtains the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, whereby our Faith is strengthen'd, our Charity increas'd, and our Sanctification wrought. Besides, he is our King, our Governour, our Head, our Brother, *And we are members of his body, of his* Eph. 5. *flesh, and of his bones; he supports us in all* 30.

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Dangers,

Dangers, and he carries us through all Temptations.

2dly. Because the Love of our Parents, of our nearest Relations, and of our best Friends, is infinitely below the Love of Jesus Christ, who having lov'd us first, is come down from Heaven in great Humility, and has taken our Nature with all its innocent Infirmities, that he might teach us the Mysteries of our Salvation, and offer himself up in Sacrifice, in order to deliver us from an everlasting Misery, and to purchase unto us the Right to a glorious Immortality. Now which of our Kindred and Friends would make himself poor to make us rich, bear the greatest Affronts, and suffer all manner of Injuries, to get us much Honour and Glory, *Humble himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,* to raise and perfect our Nature, and to make us live happily? Which of 'em would expose himself to the dreadful Wrath of God, to shelter us from it? None, none would do such things for us; wherefore we must love them all less than our dear Lord Jesus Christ, otherwise we can't be his Disciples, nor partake of his Glory.

Rev. I.
18.

3dly. Because he is the Supreme Judge of the World, in whose *Power are the Keys of Hell and Death*, as likewise, *The Keys of Heaven, and of Eternal Life*: Who needs but say the word, and we shall be either plung'd into an endless Misery, or made Partakers of a most happy and glorious Eternity: It may be added, that being infinitely above all, in Dignity, in Power, and in Goodness; if he be not prefer'd to all, a most grievous Affront

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is put upon him, which he will be reveng'd of in a most dreadful manner.

4thly. Because whenever he requires of us to sacrifice our Lives, and we acquiesce to his Will, he gives us instead of a frail, short, unquiet and mortal Life, subject to a world of Infirmities, liable to all manner of Evils, full of Guilt and Corruption, of Fears and Perplexities; he gives us, I say, instead of it, a permanent, easy, uncorruptible and everlasting Life, free from all Vices, and consequently from all Misery, Sorrow, Pain and Affliction; on the contrary, full of Purity and Holiness, of Pleasures, Joy and Content; wherefore we are not to wonder, if the Martyrs run to the most barbarous Deaths with Hearts full of Chearfulness, for being convinc'd of the fulfilling of our blessed Lord's Promises, *That he who loses his life for his sake, shall find it; That whosoever shall lose his life, shall pre-serve it; and, That he who hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal; being,* I say, convinced of the performance of these Promises, what could they do more advantageous to themselves, than to part with a wretched and very short Life, for a most glorious and eternal one. A Self unprejudiced Love, that has any Insight into *Things which pertain to the kingdom of God,* into the Glory and Happiness of those that are faithful to Jesus Christ to their Life's End, will powerfully induce us to imitate the Martyrs, whenever our Holy Religion requires that we should suffer and die. If we did but leave off our Prejudices, and listen to Reason, and consult our Self-Interest, we should find, that it is

Matt. 10.
39.
Luke 17.
33.
John 12.
25.
Acts 1.
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infinitely

infinitely better and more prudent, to sacrifice the Remainder of a cloudy and very short Life, full of Sorrows, continually expos'd to the most grievous Accidents, and that decays sensibly, for the Glory and the Service of our blessed Lord, in whose Power it is, after our Bodies have been reduc'd to Dust, to make them Partakers of a glorious Resurrection, and withal, to raise our Souls to the highest Perfection their Nature is capable of, and to bless us with an Eternity of Happiness; we should find, that it is infinitely better and more prudent to sacrifice the remainder of such a Life, than to take up with a bare possibility of prolonging that wretched Life, which every Moment may prove the End of, at the hazard of losing his most valuable Favour, and of incurring his dreadful Indignation, at the Risque of bringing upon us unexpressible and irrecoverable Mischiefs, at the Expence of the everlasting Welfare of our precious Souls, of the inexhaustible Treasures of Heaven, and of an Eternity of Joy, Pleasure and Glory.

I add to these Reasons, which, I think, powerfully induce us to submit to the Yoke of Jesus Christ; *That man being born to trouble,* Job. 5. 7. *says Job, as the sparks are flying upward; the Question is not, Whether we will suffer or no, (for suffer we must, let our Circumstances be what they will) but, Whether we had rather indure Misery, Pain, Grief and Affliction in the Cause of Sin, and in the Service of our inordinate Passions, than in the Cause of Virtue, and in the Service of our blessed Lord; and so, whether we will be-*
come

come the Slaves of Vice, which will rack us in this World, and torment us for ever in the next; or whether we chuse to be the Servants of Jesus Christ, whose infinite Goodness will assist, comfort and bless us in this Life and make us partakers of a most happy and glorious Eternity in the Life to come: Whether in spite of the Checks, the Reproaches, and the Stings of our Consciences, we will gratify our Lust, our Avarice, our Pride and Ambition; or whether to have a contented Mind, we will rather chuse to be at the trouble of mortifying our Flesh, and of restraining our wicked Inclinations: Whether we will prefer to the working out the Salvation of our immortal Souls, the pampering of our wretched Bodies, which are to Day acting upon the Surface of the Earth, and perhaps to Morrow they shall be only fit to be laid in it; finally, whether we will die in our Vices, and so go into Hell, the place of an everlasting Misery, or end our Life in the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so be admitted into Heaven, the Abode of an Eternal Bliss.

C H A P. XIII.

What Sin exacts for its Pleasures and Goods, compared with what Religion requires for its Blessings and Advantages.

NOW I appeal to any Man of Sense and Reason, that will seriously reflect upon the two Yokes in hand, whether those things which Jesus Christ requires of us, and which are look'd upon as so hard, so unreasonable, so grievous, even so unpracticable, are not very just, exceedingly profitable, most prosperous, and very feasible. But to be more and more convinc'd, that the Yoke of Jesus Christ is easy, and his Empire mild, that his Laws are very advantageous, and the Duties he enjoins us most reasonable; I desire, that what Sin exacts for its transient Pleasures, and its frivolous Goods, may be compar'd with what Religion requires for its most excellent Blessings, and its unexpressible Advantages, and that the Consequences of the one and of the other may be set together, afterwards I don't question, but it will evidently appear, that the things which Jesus Christ expects of us, are not only less painful, hard and hazardous, but likewise more satisfactory, and infinitely more profitable than those which Sin demands of us. Now Religion will have us repent of our Sins, believe its Truths, curb our Passions, forgive our Enemies, and suffer many Evils; forsake all, expose our Life to great Dangers, and even lose it, if either the promoting

promoting of God's Glory, or the increase of our Redeemer's Kingdom require it. It forbids the unlawful Pleasures, but it permits the innocent ones. Now, What do we get by submitting to what Religion requires of us? A contented Mind, a peaceable Conscience, and well grounded hopes of an eternal, exceeding happy, and most glorious Life. What else? The Grace of Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, whereby our Happiness shall be perfect and everlasting.

Sin will likewise have Men repent of several of their Actions, and believe a world of Falshoods, that either belong to Idolary, or that respect either its own Nature, or its Advantages, or its Pleasures. It will have them restrain their Passions, and dissemble their Resentments. It makes them run into a multitude of Troubles, Sorrows and Mischiefs, it induces them to leave their nearest Relations, and their most intimate Friends, as well as to part with an easy, quiet, sweet and pleasant Life, in order to gratify either their Avarice, or their Ambition. It exposes them to imminent Dangers, and brings upon them infamous and lamentable Deaths. It frequently keeps them not only from enjoying unlawful, but also innocent Pleasures. I appeal to the Consciences of proud, envious, covetous, ambitious, unjust and lascivious Men, whether what I assert is not true. Now, What do they get? Pleasure. But what Pleasure? Alas! a transient, very transient one, which is attended with Bitterness, Grief, and Perplexity. What else? the gratifying
for

a very little while, violent and unruly Passions, that hurry them into a world of Mischiefs, till they pass from Time into Eternity. What do they get then? Alas! nothing but Woes, endless Woes!

Now let my Reader judge, whether the Troubles, the Cares, and the Labours which Religion expects, are not less hard and difficult than those which Sin demands: But tho' they should be as full of Difficulties, why should we refuse to submit to them, since the Advantages of Religion are incomparably greater than the Advantages of Sin? If the Gospel does not require greater Hardships than Sin, and if as great Endeavours as those we do to gratify either Covetousness, or Pride, or Envy, or Ambition, or Concupiscence, are sufficient to get to Heaven, what Cause, I beseech you, have we to complain? Oh! did we but take as much Care and Pains for the Salvation of our precious Souls, as we do for the Welfare of our vile Bodies! Were we but as sollicitous for a glorious Immortality, as we are for a short wretched Life! Had we but as vehement Desires for the inexhaustible Treasures of Heaven, as we have for the perishable Riches of the Earth! If we would but support the Incumbrances and the Difficulties which our Flesh, the World, and the Devil throw into the way of Religion, with the same Patience and the same Steadiness, as we bear the Fatigues, the Inconveniences, and the Hardships of a Journey, or a Voyage! were we but resolved to shun ill Companies as circumspectly as we avoid great Dangers, and to withstand the Temptations of the Enemies

Enemies of our Salvation, with as much Vigour as we resist them that would engage us to do things contrary to our Worldly Interest! I dare assert, that we should discharge the Duties which Religion requires of us, and so, that our Hopes for Heaven should be incomparably better grounded, than all the Expectations we can have in this World. Now let any impartial and unprejudiced Man judge, whether the Advantage is not in all respects on the Side of our blessed Lord's Yoke; whether it is not an easy matter to shew to those, who under the pretence of the Difficulties and the Hardships of Religion, do neglect what it requires, and give themselves over to a bad Life, that they really take more pains, and are at a greater trouble to come to Ruin, than is required to work out their Salvation, and that they could go to Heaven with less Uneasiness, Inconveniences and Labours, than into Hell. I refer it to him, whether there is any reason to be startled at a good Life, because of the great Watchfulness, Diligence, Cares and Pains it requires, since a wicked one exacts a great deal more; and whether he that walks in a rough and uneven way, that runs upon the brink of a Precipice, may say with any appearance of reason, that he can't walk in the smooth Paths of Righteousness, *And run the race which is set before him*, wherein there are great ^{Heb. 12.} Assistances, many Comforts, abundance of Satisfaction, and at the End of it, Eternal Crowns.

C H A P. XIV.

Another Objection concerning our Inability of performing the Evangelical Precepts; the Answer to it, and the Conclusion of this Discourse.

THIS other Objection may be made, that indeed the Yoke of Jesus Christ is neither uneasy nor hard, nor heavy in itself, but that it is only so by Accident; that the Christian Religion is really very agreeable to Reason, and accommodated to our Interest. We could easily, and would cheerfully do what it requires of us, were we but like our first Parents, before they had eaten of the forbidden Fruit. But alas! far from being pure and innocent, our Nature is very much polluted, and extremely criminal; we are fallen into Sin, which has weaken'd so much our Reason, that it has little or no Strength, and is incapable to resist the Violence of our Passions which drive us from

Pf. 119.
36. 16. 11. *The Paths of our Lord's Commandments, which*
Prov. 2. *are the Paths of Life, into the crooked ways of*
13. 15. *Darkness, which are the ways of Death.*
15. 14, 12. Besides the powerful Enemies of our Salvation that are within and without us, make use of all their Engines, and of all their Subtilty to induce us to do Evil, to take upon us the Yoke of Sin, and to gratify our inborn wicked Inclinations: But in order to clear this Difficulty, I desire my Reader to consider, that this Discourse regards Christi-
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ans redeem'd out of the Power of Sin, of the Devil, and the World, translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and made capable, by the Assistance they receive from Heaven, *To hinder Sin from reigning in their mortal body;* Col. 2. 3.
To wrestle against Principalities, against Powers, Rom. 6.
against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, Eph. 6. 12.
against Spiritual Wickedness in High Places. Rom. 6.
And to ob.y from the Heart that Form of Doctrine 17.
which has been deliver'd us. It is too well known, that we are not able of our selves so much as to have a good Thought, but it is likewise well known, to our great Comfort, that we are not left to our selves, and that Jesus Christ supports, assists, and strengthens us by his Spirit, *For we are filled, says S. Paul,* Col. 1. 9,
with the Knowledge of his Will in all Wisdom 10, 11, 12.
and Spiritual Understanding; that we may walk
worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruit-
ful in every good Work, and increasing in the
Knowledge of God, strengthened with all might,
according to his glorious power, unto all patience
and long sufferance with joyfulness, giving thanks
unto the Father, which has made us meet to be
partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in
Light. It is well known, *That God worketh* Phil. 2;
in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure; 13.
That Jesus Christ is the way leading us to the John 4. 6.
Truth which helps us to Life; and that our being subject to fall into Sin, is remedied by Repentance, our imperfect Holiness supplied by the Merit of our blessed Lord, and our defective Obedience to God's Commandments made up by his most powerful Intercession. Thus it plainly appears, that the Yoke of Jesus Christ is not only easy, but
 likewise

Rev. 7.
12.

likewise attended with all the Incouragement, and all the Assistance, which can reasonably be desir'd; wherefore let us take upon our selves, with Chearfulness, that blessed Yoke, and bear it contentedly, even with the greatest Joy; for in truth it is the only way to find Rest unto our Souls, to have a settled Mind, and a peaceable Conscience, to enjoy a Life full of Comforts, and to obtain, when we leave this World, a glorious Immortality. Now, to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, whose Yoke is easy and Burden light, *Be Blessing and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, for ever and ever. Amen.*

FINIS.

6 AP 58

ERRATA.

PAGE 13. Line 35. for *uur*, read *our*. p. 18. l. 19. f. *Sickness* r. *Fickleness*. p. 19. l. 21. r. *Sin made it a Sink of Evil*. p. 24. l. 22. f. *make* r. *makes*. p. 25. l. 27. f. *ro* r. *to*. p. 29. l. 4. f. . put : l. 24. f. *better* r. *bitter*. p. 31. l. 20. f. *blessigns* r. *blessings*. p. 45. l. 6. f. *distracti-on* r. *detraction*. l. 10. f. *possibly* r. *possible*. p. 48. l. 18. r. *our*. p. 53. l. 14. r. *makes*. l. 22. r. *great*. p. 55. l. 15. r. *its*. p. 59. l. 30. f. *turn'd* r. *torn*. p. 61. l. 23. f. *Content* r. *Contentedly*. l. 24. r. *otherwise*. p. 62. l. 32. r. *for* p. 67. l. 22. f. *into* r. *unto*.

